



Department of Justice

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FORMER CAPTAIN OF JEFFERSON POLICE DEPARTMENT
INDICTED FOR POSSESSION OF A HAND GRENADE

Former Officer Also Charged With Possessing a Handgun While Being a Drug User

Gainesville, GA - DENNIS LAMAR THOMAS, 49, of Jefferson, Georgia, has been indicted by a federal grand jury on charges of possession of a firearm while being a drug user and possession of a destructive device (a grenade). THOMAS was arraigned today before United States Magistrate Judge Susan S. Cole in Gainesville. THOMAS remains detained without bond.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said of the case, "This is a sad case of a former law enforcement officer, who rose to the rank of Captain but is now alleged to be a drug user in possession of a gun. Even worse, this former officer was allegedly found in possession of a hand grenade, a dangerous device that has no legitimate civilian purpose."

"This case is troubling and the allegations are serious," said Special Agent in Charge Gregory K. Gant of ATF's Atlanta Field Division. "Our job is to ensure public safety, and to prevent violent crime and tragedy before it occurs. Drugs, guns and explosives don't mix."

According to Nahmias, the indictment and information presented in court: On October 7, 2008, THOMAS, a former Captain and Acting Assistant Chief of the Jefferson Police Department, allegedly was an unlawful user of a controlled substance while he possessed a .38 caliber Smith & Wesson handgun. The indictment also charges that on October 8, 2008, THOMAS possessed a destructive device, namely a grenade, which he had not registered in the National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record.

Prior to the federal indictment, THOMAS was arrested on related state charges in October 2008. Those charges are still pending. THOMAS allegedly violated a protective order by going to his estranged wife's home in the Jefferson area and demanding that he be allowed to enter. Officers were called to the home and allegedly found THOMAS in possession of a Smith & Wesson handgun as well as a crack pipe with cocaine residue on it. THOMAS was arrested. Subsequent to his arrest, officers executed search warrants at THOMAS' home and on his personal vehicle. During the search, officers allegedly found additional drugs in his home and found the hand grenade inside of a City of Jefferson police bag located in his personal vehicle. THOMAS was not a member of the Jefferson Police Department at the time of the incident, having been fired from his police post in 2007.

Members of the public are reminded that the indictment only contains charges. The defendant is presumed innocent of the charges and it will be the government's burden to prove the defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.

This case is being investigated by Special Agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), and the Jackson County Sheriff's Office, with assistance from the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) and the City of Jefferson Police Department.

Assistant United States Attorney Stephanie Gabay-Smith is prosecuting the case.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan>.